

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

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R 131552Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 787

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 10147

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EG, UR

SUBJ: PRESS PREPARATION FOR BREZHNEV

SUMMARY: IN PREPARATION BREZHNEV VISIT, EGYPTIAN PRESS AND GOE LEADERS ARE GIVING EXTRA, BUT NOT EXTRAVAGANT, ATTENTION TO SOVIET FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION WITH EGYPT. CURIOUSLY, GOE HAS DELIBERATELY CONTRIVED TO RAISE QUESTIONS ABOUT ASWAN DAM ONLY WEEKS PRIOR BREZHNEV ARRIVAL. END SUMMARY

1. EGYPTIAN PRESS, WITH EXCEPTION OF PUBLICATIONS OF AMIN BROTHERS' AKHBAR ORGANIZATION, IS CLEARLY GIVING EXTRA SPACE AND PROMINENT FEATURE TREATMENT TO SOVIET-ORIENTED NEWS AS PREPARATION FOR BREZHNEV VISIT. HOWEVER, WE ARE STRUCK BY RESTRAINT BEING SHOWN IN SELECTION OF SUCH ITEMS FOR FRONT PAGE DISPLAY. LOCAL JOURNALISTS TELL US GOE HAS NOT ISSUED ANY GUIDELINES, EVEN INFORMALLY, ON THIS SUBJECT. RESULT HAS
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BEEEN THAT SEVERAL STORIES SEEM TO HAVE ACTUALLY BEEN PLAYED

DOWN. ARRIVAL OF SOVIET REAR ADMIRAL WITH CRUISER AND DESTROYER (CAIRO) MERITED ONLY THREE LINES IN AHRAH. SOVIET DELEGATION ARRIVING TO MAKE ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR BREZHNEV VISIT HAVE BEEN REPORTED ON INSIDE PAGES.

2. FURTHER, BOTH PRESIDENT SADAT AND FONMIN FAHMY HAVE ALLOWED OCCASIONS TO PASS BY WHICH WOULD HAVE AFFORDED OPPORTUINITY FOR EXTRAVAGANT PRAISE OF SOVIETS. RECENT CASES IN POINT WERE SADAT MESSAGE TO PARTICIPANTS IN SOVIET-EGYPTIAN FRIENDSHIP WEEK (CAIRO 10032), FAHMY INTERVIEW IN SAWT AL-FAM'I'A (CAIRO 9991), AND HEGAZI'S GOVERNMENT POLICY STATMENT TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (CAIRO 9642). IN GENERAL, GOE SPOKESMEN AND PRESS COMMENTATORS HAVE LIMITED THEMSELVES TO PRAISE OF SOVIET-EGYPTITAN FRIENDSHIP, MODERATELY-EXPRESSED GRATITUDE FOR PAST MILITARY AND ECONOMIC SUPPORT, AND EXPRESSION PIOUS HOPE THIS SUPPORT WILL BE CONTINUED OR RESUMED.

3. WE ARE INTRIGUED, TOO, BY DELIBERATE RAISING OF QUESTIONS IN PUBLIC MIND OF POSSIBLE PERNICIOUS SIDE EFFECTS CREATED BY CONSTRUCTION OF ASWAN DAM, WHICH IS JEWEL IN SOVIET'S HALO LOCALLY. PEOPLES ASSEMBLY SPEAKER MAR'I, WHO IS SADAT CONFIDANT AND AGRICULTURAL ENGINEER, HAS SPOKEN PUBLICLY ABOUT THESE UNEXPECTED SIDE EFFECTS, AND PRESS NOW REPORTS CABINET WILL STUDY COMPREHENSIVE REPORT ON DAM. FURTHER, AN ASSEMBLY MEMBER ASKED MINIRRIGATION ON FLOOR OF HOUSE DEC.6 HOW HE PROPOSES DEAL WITH PROBLEMS OF FLOOD, SILT, EROSION, WATER POLLUTION, SUBTERRANEAN WATER LEVEL, AND DETERIORATION OF SOIL FERTILITY. ALL IN ALL THIS IS NOT WHAT SOVIET EMBASSY STAFF WILL WISH TO SEE IN THEIR MORNING NEWSPAPERS. EILTS

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